



It's Cool to Know the Rules

DRIVING LAWS FOR VIRGINIA'S TEENS

Your driver's license gives you a lot of freedom. But, it also brings new responsibilities. Here's a summary of some of your responsibilities.

1 You must be a resident of the Commonwealth and at least 16 years and three months of age to obtain a driver's license. You may apply for a learner's permit when you turn 15 years and six months of age. Without exception, if you are under age 18, you must hold the learner's permit for at least nine months or until you turn 18 before you can receive your driver's license. In addition, until you reach age 19, you must provide proof of successful completion of a state-approved driver's education course which includes both classroom and behind-the-wheel instruction.

2 In order to get your learner's permit, you will need to pass a two-part knowledge exam and a vision screening at DMV. Contact your nearest DMV customer service center for a driver's manual and be sure to study it before you

take the exam. If you are under 18 and you fail the test, you must wait 15 days before you can take it again.

3 Your learner's permit allows you to operate a motor vehicle when a licensed driver at least 21 years of age is seated beside you. Or, if the person accompanying you is your legal guardian, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, step-brother or step-sister, he or she must be at least 18 years of age.

The driver accompanying you must hold a valid driver's license, be legally permitted to drive and be alert and able to assist you. They may not be under the influence of alcohol or have a suspended license. If you learn to drive with an experienced and safe driver, you'll learn more and be better prepared for the challenges of safe driving.

4 New curfew laws prohibit drivers under age 18 who hold a learner's permit or driver's license from driving from midnight to 4 a.m. If you hold a driver's license you may drive during these hours in case of an emergency, when traveling to and from work or a school-sponsored event or when accompanied by a parent or other adult acting in place of a parent.

Also, you are restricted to the number of passengers under age 18 which may travel with you when you drive (one passenger if you are age 16; three passengers if you are age 17). If you hold a learner's permit you may carry only one passenger under age 18. Passenger restrictions do not apply to family members.

5 If you are under age 20, you will be required to attend a driver improvement clinic after your first demerit point conviction (including safety belt and child restraint violations). You will not receive safe driving points for attending this clinic. If you do not complete the clinic within 90 days, your driving privilege will be suspended until the clinic is completed.



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If you are under age 18, after your second demerit point conviction, DMV will suspend your permit or license for 90 days. After the third demerit point conviction, DMV will revoke your permit or license for one year or until you reach age 18, whichever is longer. Drive safely, obey all the signs and be sure you and your passengers buckle-up and this won't be a problem.

6 Your parents, custodial parent or guardian have responsibilities, too. If you are under age 18, they must give permission for you to obtain a driver's license and certify that you received at least 40 hours of driving practice (10 hours completed after sunset) before you receive a license. They can also take your license for any amount of time or direct DMV to cancel your license for a six month period. Talk to your parents or guardian about what they expect from you as a new driver in the family.

7 A juvenile court judge can suspend your license for any number of reasons, including truancy, alcohol or drug-related offenses, delinquency and curfew violations. Keep your record clean and you'll stay on the road.

8 Visit DMV's web site for more information about learner's permits and becoming a licensed driver in Virginia. www.dmvnow.com